

Neighbourhood News & Views

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY
ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.
Spring 2008

10th Anniversary Issue

Part One

Highlights from the First Five Years

COMPILED BY LAVINIA WELSH

To mark a decade of service to our community, we asked for a volunteer from the board of directors of the AWWCA to compile a summary of our history, highlighting the issues and successes of the AWWCA. A recent addition to our board, Lavinia Welsh, willingly volunteered. She has gleaned the following from AWWCA newsletters published between 1998 and 2003. Her compilation of the last five years (2004-8) of our history will be published in the autumn issue.

A public celebration of the AWWCA's 10th anniversary will take place on Saturday, June 28, at 1 p.m. at Westdale's KIDSFEST (formerly Westfest) in the Westdale Village Business Improvement Area. Our anniversary will also be recognized at our 10th annual general meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

In the Beginning— 1998 and 1999

Concern over the building of monster rental houses in 1995 prompts **Linda Grigg** and **Joy James** to form a steering committee in the summer of 1998. A name, logo, and byline are chosen. Modeled after the association's byline, Building Community Block by Block, a block-representative system is organized,

with 100 representatives.

The first meeting of the new grassroots association is held in September 1998. Its mission is to provide an effective collective voice for resident homeowners about issues that directly affect their lives.

A membership campaign includes a survey of members' concerns. A good-neighbour brochure is produced for distribution in the community. Twelve committees are struck, including a New Entrance to McMaster Committee. By the spring of 1999 regular newsletters are in production, co-ordinated by executive-committee member **Rick Grigg**. Bright yellow window signs with the AWWCA radiant-house logo and the message Because We Care make their debut.

Several executive-committee members sit on the McMaster Area Task Force, and 250 residents attend a community consultation April 14 to review a draft report produced by the task force. After the meeting the final recommendations are presented to the City of Hamilton planning and development committee. An implementation committee begins its work.

Property standards and noise are identified as the chief concerns of members.

On May 19, 1999, close to 80 members of the AWWCA gather at Dalewood School to finalize the constitution and bylaws, and the steering committee delivers

exactly what they had set out to deliver:

An established association with a fully registered membership of over 300 resident homeowners, along with a network of block representatives, plans for election of an executive committee, a healthy bank balance, accounting mechanisms, and a structure for administering an association like the AWWCA.

President **Phyllis Tresidder** noted: "We're putting ourselves in a position of knowing about and guiding change in our community rather than having to react to changes brought to bear by others."

Property standards and noise are identified as the chief concerns of members. Also noted is the increasing number of rental properties.

Membership levels reach 350 by the autumn of 1999.

Entering the 21st Century—2000

St. Catharines residents living close to Brock University contact AWWCA executive-committee members for advice. The AWWCA suggests they work with the police. The Hamilton Police Service reports that the AWWCA is likely the first university-area neighbourhood association to form a working relationship with their local police service. It appears Brock University's neighbours will be the second.

The AWWCA supports an initiative of the Kirkendall neighbourhood regarding

regional and provincial environmental controls, particularly the process of reviewing Certificate of Approval applications for Discharge to Air by industry in our region. A supporting letter is drafted for presentation to council. The initiative is supported by most other neighbourhood groups in Hamilton.

Neighbourhood concerns are reported by The Hamilton Spectator.

The Regional Municipality of Hamilton proceeds with an environmental assessment for the newly proposed Main Street West entrance to McMaster University, including its impact on surrounding neighbourhoods. The process includes studying traffic patterns, transportation routes, and land-use issues. The need for a neighbourhood plan is noted, and the AWWCA is represented on the Community Advisory Committee that ensues. We circulate a petition regarding housing concerns due to the double cohort and present it to the university's board of governors. Our neighbourhood concerns are also reported by *The Hamilton Spectator*.

The 30-foot steel and concrete structure proposed by the city parks department to provide shade at the children's playground in Churchill Fields is opposed by residents, and the city plants six trees instead.

AWWCA members monitor liquor-license applications and successfully have them modified or withdrawn.

AWWCA president **Phyllis Tresidder** is named Woman of the Year for community service by the City of Hamilton.

Executive-committee member **Lauren Arkell** redesigns the newsletter, and charter executive-committee member **Janet Woodward** takes over co-ordination of the newsletter with the summer 2000 issue. Because We Care buttons are produced. E-mail communication with members is noted in the newsletter for the first time. A letter of introduction to the AWWCA is produced.

The AWWCA joins with the McMaster Students Union and the McMaster Faculty Association to persuade the university to stop displaying third-party advertising on its new Mactron sign, to turn the sign away from the residential area, and to limit its hours of operation.

The AWWCA executive agrees to subsidize members for two years up to \$100 per year for the cost of a resident making an appeal for a cause that reflects the general principles of the AWWCA.

Neighbourhood planning begins.

Pollution of Dalewood Creek from sewer spillage results in an education campaign in the newsletter by AWWCA member **Bill Farkas** to support the construction of a combined-sewer overflow tank to protect public health and the environment. An environment committee is formed.

Neighbourhood planning begins. The AWWCA also participates in a new Coalition of Ontario University Neighbourhoods to lobby provincial and federal authorities.

Inappropriate real-estate ads promoting single-family homes as investment properties are reported to the Real Estate Council of Ontario and the Hamilton-Burlington and District Real Estate Board.

Paid-up membership grows to 375.

2001—the Environment and McMaster Take Centre Stage

The AWWCA's environment committee is led by executive-committee member **Stefania Miller**. Executive-committee member **Kenneth Sherman**, also on the environment committee, organizes a press conference to call upon the "new City of Hamilton to prioritize the cleanup of Cootes Paradise from sewage runoff at a Sterling Street overflow pipe in a ravine near Whitton Road." The committee organizes the first neighbourhood cleanup of the ravine area and starts to mobilize support for the new city government to make it a priority to install a holding tank to keep combined-sewer overflows from spilling sewage into Dalewood Creek.

Press conference calls upon the new City of Hamilton to clean up Cootes Paradise from sewage runoff.

Arrangements are made to store AWWCA newsletters permanently in special collections at the main branch of the Hamilton Public Library. Our newsletter designer resigns, and newsletters are contracted out in 2001.

McMaster's President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations presents its first community-service award to **Betty** and **Jim Bechtel**, who were among the founding members of the AWWCA.

Executive-committee member **Betty Bechtel** works closely with Hamilton police, providing regular police and security updates to members through the AWWCA newsletter and via e-mail. She is invited to represent the AWWCA on the police superintendent's Citizen's Advisory Committee.

Executive-committee members **Linda** and **Rick Grigg** organize a petition leading the Committee of Adjustment to deny six applications to enclose five garages on Ward Avenue and one on Royal Avenue at student-rental properties owned by one person. The removal of six off-street parking spaces would have added to parking problems, and the gross floor area would have been more than twice the maximum permitted.

In a meeting with **Councillor Marvin Caplan**, the AWWCA asks him to arrange for "no truck" signs to be installed on the residential streets around Dalewood School and Prince Philip School and asks for enforcement of the ban.

McMaster University Staff Association members vote to strike and ask the AWWCA to act as a community liaison to mitigate negative effects the strike might have on the surrounding neighbourhood.

Community groups, including the AWWCA, write a letter of concern to the mayor and council about the cosmetic use of pesticides. Vandalism and graffiti are noted as problems and solutions proposed.

Executive-committee member **Loreen Jerome's** first essay for a new section of the newsletter, *The Way We Were*, appears in the autumn 2001 issue.

The City of Hamilton includes the AWWCA on notices of applications for variances. Loreen sorts through them on behalf of the neighbourhood. Two successful interventions by executive-committee members are the result.

Executive-committee member **Carolyn Kinsley** writes a letter to the Committee of Adjustment and attends the hearing to help defeat a variance application by Vector to erect a large, double-faced rooftop billboard at 1685 Main St. W.

On Nov. 19, 2001, the AWWCA is incorporated under the laws of the Province of Ontario.

On to 2002

The AWWCA meets with **Mayor Bob Wade** and points out McMaster's draft campus plan does not include student housing, on or off campus, and asks him to introduce bylaws to control the conversion of single-family houses to rental units. It was noted that the McMaster Area Task

Force Report states that a reduction in the concentration of student housing is necessary to maintain balanced neighbourhoods. The AWWCA also raises concerns with the city and the university about the approaching double cohort in 2003.

AWWCA members **Bob and Michelle Edmonds** volunteer their expertise to redesign and lay out the newsletter. The board chooses a name for the newsletter: *Neighbourhood News & Views*. The new format, launched with the spring issue, includes a masthead for the first time. It shows **Janet Woodward** as newsletter co-ordinator, **Carolyn Kinsley** as copy editor, and **Malcolm Horsnell** as editorial consultant.

After being denied a variance in 2001, Vector applies for a variance at 1685 Main St. W. for another type of billboard 49 per cent larger. **Phyllis and Warren Tresidder** attend the Committee of Adjustment to present the AWWCA's letter of objection and respond on behalf of the AWWCA. This application is also denied.

George R. Allan School celebrates its 75th anniversary, and the AWWCA gives it coverage in the spring issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.

The AWWCA meets with MPP **David Christopherson** to discuss, among other things, the noise and lights from Highway 403 that disturb nearby residents. Mr. Christopherson had previously asked for a noise study. He pursues the issue and announces in September that light baffles will be installed.

The city places signs at 23 combined-sewer overflows warning of possibly contaminated water. After two community meetings sponsored by the AWWCA, the city announces it is prepared to do an environmental assessment and endorses the establishment of a Community Advisory Committee made up of volunteers from Ward 1.

The AWWCA joins the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods, an umbrella group of community associations in Ontario formed to give a strong, unified voice at the provincial level.

The city begins a study for a secondary plan for Ainslie Wood and Westdale to control future land use, including redevelopment. This initiative is welcomed by the AWWCA which, since its inception, had lobbied for such a plan.

The AWWCA's first annual spring cleanup.

The AWWCA's first annual spring cleanup is spearheaded by **Dmitri Malakhov**, a Grade 12 student at Westdale Secondary

School.

Phyllis Tresidder is one of the four judges who chose the new name Chedoke Cootes for Ward 1.

At the annual general meeting, Friends of the AWWCA is introduced as a new class of membership. The revised constitution and bylaws are introduced and passed. **Craig and Kleri Warren** are presented with the first Because We Care Award, which is highlighted in the winter 2002 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.

And Then It Was 2003

The AWWCA's second annual spring cleanup is held on April 26. It is organized by student **Dmitri Malakhov**, one of the AWWCA's newest members, having just reached the minimum membership age of 18. The McMaster Students Union works with the City of Hamilton waste-management division to sponsor the second "dump and run" for pickup of household items discarded by students moving out of the neighbourhood; the AWWCA advertises it in the spring issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.

The Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Infrastructure Master Plan are expected to be completed by June 2003. ASPECT (Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan Executive Committee and Team), a Citizen's Advisory Committee, includes board members **Phyllis Tresidder** and **Michael Bordin**.

The AWWCA formally opposes to city council a proposed bus-fare increase, arguing for sustainable principles.

The AWWCA receives national press coverage when *The National Post* cites a story about the double cohort from the autumn 2002 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*, and the CBC interviews past president Phyllis Tresidder on housing pressures created by the double cohort.

Developers and city staff consult the AWWCA before major development applications are made in our neighbourhood.

The AWWCA follows through on recommendations from professional planner **Ed Fothergill**, hired in the spring of 2002, which include holding quarterly meetings with the Ward 1 councillor. City planning staff agree to meet with the AWWCA to review and hear comments on site-plan applications. Developers and city staff

now realize it is good practice to consult the AWWCA before major development applications are made in our neighbourhood.

The AWWCA supports and promotes Trees Count, a program of Environment Hamilton, to gather information about our community's trees. A comprehensive tree inventory of 1,391 trees in Westdale is carried out in the summer by more than 30 community volunteers, most of whom are AWWCA members. Our community was the first in Canada to have this program.

Liz Millar's term of office as president ends September 2003. She is recognized for expanding the AWWCA's contacts with other university cities and for representing the AWWCA at the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods, community workshops, Neighbourhood Watch, the Graffiti Abatement Project, and meetings with the mayor, city officials, and McMaster University's administration and students. **Rob Payne** is voted in as president.

Rob discusses issues surrounding student housing at length in an article in the fall 2003 newsletter. On-campus student housing has declined to 20 per cent of full-time students from 24 per cent in 1980. Rob meets with McMaster's vice-president of student affairs to discuss student-housing issues and urges the university to include future housing requirements in its planning documents and share these with the surrounding residential community.

The Westdale Village Policing Centre opens to assist community members, including students.

City council passes new backyard and property-standards bylaws.

2003 brings us to the completion of five years as an association.

We thank AWWCA board member Lavinia Welsh for assembling this history. See the autumn 2008 issue for a summary of the years 2004-8.

"Building community block by block"

CHURCHILL PARK NEWS

Let's Talk about Churchill Park . . . Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

JANET WOODWARD

There was standing room only, when about 80 people crowded into the meeting room at Westdale Library April 29. The purpose of the meeting, organized by Councillor Brian McHattie's office, was to initiate a conversation about Churchill Park—to find out what is important to those who use it and how it could be used in the future.

AWWCA member **Mary Louise Pigott** opened the meeting, saying that when she heard last year the park would be going through a master-plan process to decide its future, she wanted to get the community involved so residents could have a say if

there were to be changes. Mr. McHattie explained that the master-plan process takes place about every 20 years for every park in the city. Mary Louise emphasized there is presently no plan for the park and that we had gathered to find out what residents and others who use it would like the park to look like in the future.

The meeting was facilitated by a resident of the Kirkendall neighbourhood, **Charmaine Sherlock**, of the Compass Group. Local historian and author **Brian Henley** spoke about the history of the park and the Westdale area in the 1920s. **Mark Runciman**, executive director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, spoke about

the RBG and its excellent relationship with the city, noting the city leases the park for a nominal sum and provides upkeep. **Adam Bienenstock**, of Gardens for Living, provided a look at Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto to show how they use their park space.

Ms. Sherlock spoke of the need for a deeply democratic process. She said: "We have heard the voice of history and how special this space is . . . now we need to hear the voices of the people." Then she asked for comments from the gathered crowd. One by one, 30 residents introduced themselves and spoke with quiet passion about the park and what it means to them personally. We heard the voices of those who want to preserve the park as it is, as they spoke about the things they love and want to keep. We also heard the voices of those who want to enhance it and make it more of a community park. And we heard from those who have questions and issues, some of whom gave suggestions for improvement.

In concluding the meeting, Mr. McHattie said this was the first of several and encouraged us to stay involved in the process. The city's report on the meeting is at brianmchattie.ca/past_commMtg2.php.

Janet Woodward is the AWWCA's membership secretary and newsletter co-ordinator.



Mary Louise Pigott speaking at the meeting, with Charmaine Sherlock on the left and Councillor Brian McHattie on the right.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Play in the Park

Calling all neighbourhood kids and parents to participate in capture the flag, kick the can, jump rope, co-operative games, ham and cheese, scavenger hunts, obstacle courses, and many more activities. Bring balls, jump ropes, parents, and game ideas.

Play in the Park takes place Mondays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at Churchill Park playground from May 5 to the end of school in June. In the fall it runs from the beginning of school to Thanksgiving.

Organized by **Sharlene Loudon**, B. Kin., and AWWCA



Playing magic glove (a tag game created by one of the children) with co-leader Sharlene Loudon. Photo: Janet Woodward

member **Bettie Kloet**, B.Ed., two neighbourhood moms and CanFitPro fitness instructors, who were inspired by Silken Laumann's active-kids program, silkensactivekids.ca.

Play in the Park is seeking more parent leaders. Want to volunteer to help? Questions? Bkloet@sympatico.ca.

Children aged seven and under must be accompanied by an adult. Parents of older children are encouraged to participate with their children.

For more background on Play in the Park, see the autumn 2007 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.



Playing capture the flag with leader Bettie Kloet. Photo: Janet Woodward

Over 600 Trees Planted in Churchill Park in Three Years

JANET WOODWARD

Councillor Brian McHattie's office announced on Nov. 30 that forestry staff planted 40 trees in Churchill Park last autumn, in four locations: west of the splash pad to the tree line of the Royal Botanical Gardens' lands, north of the lawn-bowling greens, along the perimeter near Parkside Drive to the north of Glen Road, and north of the washrooms from the tree line to Parkside Drive. The species include nine common hackberries, six Kentucky coffee trees, two bitternut hickories, five three-flower maples, three red maples, 10 red oaks, and five tulip trees.

In previous issues of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we have reported on the addition of trees in Churchill Park as fol-

lows: on May 14, 2005, 25 volunteers planted 300 native trees where the park meets the RBG's natural lands; July 8, 2005, the perimeter of Churchill Park received 72 new trees; in the autumn of 2006, 16 trees were planted around the newly constructed splash pad; on Oct. 13, 2007, volunteers planted over 200 trees where the park meets the RBG's natural lands.

We are grateful for the more than 600 trees planted in the park over the past three years. Many young people in our community will live to see these trees mature and provide much-needed shade in our park.



Three of the new trees in Churchill Park. Photo: Janet Woodward

Our Community Gardens

Community gardens are an exciting approach to gardening without pesticides. If you are interested in growing your own vegetables and herbs and want to discover an excellent source of exercise and meet new friends who share the same passion for gardening, why not apply for a plot at Churchill Park community gardens at the aviary, located in the park off Oak Knoll Drive? **Beth Wheaton**, business initiatives co-ordinator for Hamilton Public Works, says: "This is a wonderful program with many positive health and environmental benefits! Sites are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, with last year's gardeners being given their same plots if possible. I also hope to see some new faces in the upcoming season."

Information: 905-546-2424, ext. 4819, or bwheaton@hamilton.ca. You can learn more about the program and fill out a registration form for a plot at myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/cityandgovernment/citydepartments/publicworks/parks/horticulture/communitygardens.htm.



Community gardens at Churchill Park.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Field Marking at Churchill Park

Councillor Brian McHattie, along with the West Hamilton Youth Soccer Club and members of the community, have been looking at alternatives to using the herbicide RoundUp to mark the playing fields at Churchill Park. With the exception of the field marking, Ward 1 remains the only ward in the city that does not use pesticides in parks.

Darren Twyford, president of the WHYSC, has done considerable research on the cost and toxicity of the alternatives: "As these fields belong to the community and the RBG, finding an alternative to the use of an herbicide to mark the fields, both selecting the methodology and the costs, falls to everyone. For its part, the West Hamilton Youth Soccer Club is investigating the effectiveness of other methodologies. We have been in touch with the Parks Department with respect to testing the effectiveness of the use of a propane torch to burn the lines onto the field, and we will be carrying out these tests over the coming season at an off-pitch section of Kay Drage Park. While this is not a solution for 2008, our club is conscious of the concern and committed to finding a balanced solution. Other clubs and community members are more than

welcome to offer ideas and resources over the summer months directly to the city."

Some of the alternatives investigated include chalk and paint, which were found to be equally toxic, especially to those applying them; would require multiple applications as opposed to a single application of RoundUp; and therefore were considerably more costly.

Given that no program is in place to replace RoundUp this year, the city continued to use it to mark the fields in the spring. The proposed provincial pesticide ban, tentatively slated for spring 2009, may also lead the city to use alternatives in the future.

If you would like to learn more about the alternatives, are able to help with further research and trials, or have other questions or suggestions, AWWCA member **Mary Louise Pigott**, who has workplace hazardous-materials experience, has volunteered to provide more information and answer questions. You can reach her at mlpigott@cogeco.ca. Or you can contact Mr. McHattie at bmchattie@hamilton.ca.

CSOs & Stroud Park NEWS

Sewer Overflows into Cootes Paradise

KENNETH SHERMAN

In 2001 I undertook a community effort to have the city examine the impact of combined-sewer overflows on the ecology of Cootes Paradise. This was triggered by a large overflow of sewage into Forsyth Creek.

Forsyth Creek outfalls into the ravine behind the homes along Dalewood Crescent and Mayfair Crescent near McMaster University's Sterling Street entrance. It then crosses the Royal Botanical Gardens' trail entrance at Oak Knoll near the aviary, where children often play. At the time of the overflow, a city contractor was raising the weir (overflow wall) in the present holding tank under Sterling Street to increase the tank's capacity to retain sewage and keep it from overflowing.

In the old City of Hamilton below the escarpment we have a combined system that collects both rainwater runoff and household sewage and pumps them back to the water-treatment plant. During heavy rain this system can overflow. A holding tank keeps the rainwater in storage until the event is over and then pumps it, as it normally would, back to the treatment plant.

"On average Hamilton CSO discharge points have in excess of 25 overflow events a year into receiving waters, including creeks, rivers, the bay, and lake," said **Gary Moore**, Hamilton's director of engineering services and implementation. In West Hamilton our receiving waters—Chedoke, Coldwater (Ancaster), and Forsyth Creeks—all empty into Cootes Paradise. If we did not allow for CSO storage, the alternative would be regular backup of sewage into our basements or continued direct release to Cootes Paradise.

In the city's newer neighbourhoods we have a separated system for sewage and rainwater runoff. In these neighbourhoods sewage goes directly to the treatment plant without any interference from an overflow. The separated system for rainwater does have overflows, but they are a less-serious pollution problem. One way homeowners can reduce the impact of these overflows is to disconnect their downspouts to allow rainwater to run onto lawns and gardens or into rain barrels. Also, we need to refrain from letting car-wash runoff or oil products flow down our paved driveways into the storm sewer.

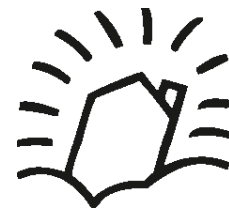
About six years ago, at the request of our former councillor, the city's water division began an environmental assessment of the effect of West Hamilton's three CSOs on

Cootes Paradise. I was part of an eight-member study team that worked with a city consultant who came forward with three recommendations: (1) installing a 15,000-cubic-metre holding tank in the park at Royal Avenue and Stroud Road (now complete—see the next article), (2) installing a 6,000-cubic-metre holding tank at the back of McMaster University's parking lot off Cootes Drive, and (3) raising the weir in the existing Sterling Street holding tank. These improvements would on average reduce CSOs to one a year instead of 25.

"Now that the Royal-Stroud holding tank is in place with a much-improved park setting, Hamilton's department of public works will see to the construction of a 6,000-cubic-metre holding tank under McMaster's Cootes Drive parking lot next summer," said Mr. Moore. "Improvements to the wastewater treatment systems and the construction of holding tanks are costs covered in our water-rate budget."

Hamilton has a plan to reduce CSOs all across our waterfront by 2012 to comply with the remedial-action plan adopted for Hamilton Harbour.

Kenneth Sherman is an AWWCA block representative.



Because
we care

Stroud Road Park: Nature and Technology Working Together

LOREEN JEROME



Stroud Road Park sign

Photo: Loreen Jerome

Stroud Road Park, located at the east side of Stroud Road and Royal Avenue, underwent a complete reconstruction beginning in 2006. The Ainslie Wood/Westdale Neighbourhood Storm Water Management Master Plan identified the need for a combined-sewer overflow tank to be installed in the area to manage overflows during large rainfalls. A Community Advisory Committee of concerned local citizens was formed, and after numerous public meetings (which I attended) a preferred solution was presented to the city in June 2003. The City of Hamilton completed a Master Environmental Assessment in 2004 identifying alternatives for combined-sewer overflows.

The storage tank, referred to as the Royal CSO, was the first step in the Ward 1 CSO Master Plan. A 15,000-cubic-metre concrete storage tank was constructed underground in the park to capture and store excess flow in wet weather. During dry weather the captured flow is pumped back into the wastewater collection system and conveyed by gravity to the Wastewater Treatment Plant at Woodward Avenue, where it receives full treatment.

Prior to the Royal CSO installation, excess rainwater and sewage discharged, untreated, into Chedoke Creek, the third largest tributary of Cootes Paradise. As a result of watershed hardening (the area surrounding the watershed becomes hardened because of pavement or buildings), proper drainage had been impeded, and the runoff was

picking up contaminants. The discharge affected spawning runs of some Lake Ontario fish and became the single largest source of excessive nutrients and sediment in Cootes Paradise.

All equipment at the Stroud Road Park site connects to an on-site Allen Bradley programmable logic controller, which records and stores information. The PLC is connected to the city's central Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system, allowing remote control of the sewage pumps and cleaning system within the storage tank in real time from the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Staff only need to visit the station to conduct scheduled maintenance work or deal with a problem alerted by a SCADA alarm. The construction cost of this site is part of a 10-year plan and is covered in our water rate. Once the underground construction was completed, the City of Hamilton began to transform the surface area into a park. Special attention was given to preserving existing trees. Five park benches and three picnic tables were installed, as well as garbage containers, interpretive signage, a seven-loop bike rack for public use, and a small parking bay.

Thirty-eight new woodland trees include

bur and red oak, basswood, black walnut, sugar and silver maple, paper birch, hackberry, trembling aspen, Juneberry, and Allegheny serviceberry. These trees when mature will provide a canopy of refreshing shade during the hot days of summer. Two separate "modules" of riparian shrubs were planted along Chedoke Creek, and 97 groundcover plants and shrubs were installed. The planting of numerous flower-seed types will enhance the visual and sensual experience for all. They include anemone, milkweed, asters, Canada milk vetch, black-eyed Susan, showy wild bergamont, and rough goldenrod.

See the photo gallery at awwca.ca for more views of the park. Even better, take a stroll through this peaceful park, linger on a bench, and enjoy the plantings.

Notes: Technical data were supplied by Hatch Mott MacDonald Engineering Consultants, Royal CSO Storage Tank Process Description, August 2007. Planting information was taken from landscape blueprints supplied by the Public Works Department of the City of Hamilton.

Loreen Jerome is the AWWCA's treasurer.



Stroud Road Park

Photo: Loreen Jerome

LIVING *in our* COMMUNITY

Make Yourself at Home in the West End | *New brochure from Campus Town Association Promotes West Hamilton*



Gord Arbeau

GORD ARBEAU

A new brochure encouraging readers to “make yourself at home in the west end” is the McMaster-Westdale Campus Town Association’s latest tool in its ongoing strategy to promote the benefits of West Hamilton living.

The Campus Town Association is a partnership between McMaster University, the Westdale Business Improvement Association, and the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc.

The new brochure features colourful photographs, information about West Hamilton’s heritage, the benefits of community life, and a detailed foldout street and amenity map. It is distributed by local realtors and businesses and is given to newly hired employees and faculty at

McMaster University.

The goal is to communicate West Hamilton’s vibrancy, attractiveness, and desirability as a place to live, raise a family, and work. Its themes of cultural diversity, intellectual energy, natural beauty, relaxing ambience, and architectural harmony reflect the unique character of the area.

Most recently, the brochure was a key tool used by McMaster representatives during a visit to Ottawa. The delegation met with leaders and employees of the federal government’s materials-technology laboratory, CANMET-MTL. The lab is relocating from the nation’s capital to McMaster Innovation Park, and many of its employees are beginning to plan their move to Hamilton. The visit is the first in a series of orientation events planned for CANMET-MTL employees to help them

make informed choices. It underscored the desirability of living in West Hamilton. With its proximity to Innovation Park, the area is a convenient and lifestyle-enhancing choice for those relocating.

You can view the brochure at awwca.ca/articles/2007/10/16/new-brochure-highlights-community-assets. If you are interested in receiving a brochure, please contact me. We also want to thank **Alice Sabourin**, whose expertise and enthusiasm were invaluable in the creation of the brochure. She is an exceptional representative of the AWWCA, and we look forward to benefiting from her knowledge and skills on future projects.

Gord Arbeau is McMaster University’s associate director, public relations. He can be reached at arbeaug@mcmaster.ca or 905-525-9140, ext. 27305.

Young Families Return to Westdale

Following are two stories of families returning to Westdale. The first is an excerpt from an article by Kathy Renwald in *The Toronto Star* Jan. 5. The second is a letter from new AWWCA members who moved to Westdale after purchasing the home that has been in their family for four generations.

With a thwack, Joanne Greene sets down Richard Florida’s The Rise of the Creative Class on a table at Williams Coffee Pub on Discovery Drive. . . . Greene looks back on 25 years of selling real estate in Hamilton. “I’ve never been bored.” She’s excited by the artist-led transformation of James St. N., a nod to Florida’s theories on artists’ effects on economic development.

And she’s happy to report another positive trend—the return of young families to Westdale, the area bordering McMaster University to the west of Main and King Streets, and just a few kilometres from the centre of downtown. “That area is changing and stabilizing since Mac added the

large new residence,” Greene says.

The just-completed student residence has reduced the demand for rental properties, so homes that were once packed with students are reverting back to single-family ownership and strengthening the village-like atmosphere of Westdale.

See thestar.com/living/article/290629 for the complete article.

AWWCA members **Cameron Whitney** and his wife, **Edith Gagnon**, wrote on Feb. 25:

We recently moved into Westdale. We have taken over Cameron’s family home on Whitton Road. This house has been in his family for four generations, and our new daughter, who was born in December, is the fifth.

We are encouraged by the strong commitment that the AWWCA has shown to our community. Your efforts on many fronts are to be commended.

Our concerns are similar to the ones shared by all residents of Westdale. The number of family homes dedicated to student housing worries us. The only solution that we would propose is that landlords be held directly accountable. As a resident, I take pride in the appearance of my home, and it is discouraging to see rental houses in such disrepair.

Our final concern is related to our municipal tax bill. We have just moved from the Toronto area and are amazed to see tax assessments higher than in parts of Toronto. For a modest house, our property tax is typically several thousand dollars higher than in various parts of Ontario.

Please accept our membership fee for the following two years. We are proud to be a part of this community and look forward to supporting your efforts to maintain it.

Cameron and Edith put their words into action when they participated in the AWWCA-sponsored Earth Day cleanup April 26.

Our Walkable Community

ALICE SABOURIN

The walkability committee’s efforts are reaching an important milestone. The neighbourhood group, a committee of the AWWCA, has drafted a report for Ward 1 Councillor **Brian McHattie** that has a series of recommendations to maintain and improve walkability in Westdale South and Ainslie Wood East. The committee expects to finalize the draft in May and will continue to track the implementation of recommendations in the coming months. Further details will be included in the next issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*. In the meantime, please contact me at 905-523-0337 or sabourin@cogeco.ca if you are interested in being involved in auditing other areas of Westdale and Ainslie Wood. For more information on the walkability committee, see page 7 of the autumn 2007 issue.

AWWCA member Alice Sabourin is chair of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale walkability committee, a committee of the AWWCA.



Walkability committee banner

Our "Best Practice" Community

On Jan. 20 the AWWCA received congratulations from TownGown World (towngownworld.com), a website dedicated to exploring planning issues that affect near-campus communities, for being selected as a Best Practice Community.

To be included in this listing, an organization must have an active website and a formal organizational structure, leverage the positive aspects of living near a higher educational institution as well as work to minimize the negative impacts, be seen as a credible voice for the community (for example, be invited to participate in joint meetings with the higher educational institution and the host city), and be endorsed by city officials. Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Councillor Brian McHattie provided strong endorsements for the work of the AWWCA. You can view the writeup at towngownworld.com/bestpractice.html.



Westdale Slide Show

A skyscraper.com slide show of Westdale is featured on College Town Life: collegetownlife.com/college/ct_Option_of_Urbanism.htm; click on the first item in the centre, Old School Suburbia. The slide show is also available for viewing at auwca.ca/articles/2008/02/05/westdale-slide-show-featured-college-town-life.

Following e-mail notices to members about our inclusion as a Best Practise Community and the slide show, AWWCA member Roman March wrote on Feb. 18: *It is delightful that the association and its work have received such recognition in the form of the accolades from other groups. The slides are beautiful. I have forwarded them to many friends and relatives, from Vancouver to Montreal, to show them where we live, and brag a bit about Westdale.*

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

West Hamilton Can Benefit Greatly with LRT

KENNETH SHERMAN

In June, Hamilton City Council will consider whether a rapid-transit feasibility study should move forward. Funding for construction of rapid transit, by bus or light rail, will come largely from the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority under the provincial MoveOntario 2020 program.

The program's website states: "MoveOntario 2020 includes 902 kilometres of new or improved rapid transit that will move people efficiently around the region. It will result in 800 million new transit trips per year, taking 300 million car trips off Greater Toronto Area roads. This will cut smog and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 10 megatonnes by 2020. The provincial government will pay 65 per cent of the cost—\$11.5 billion—out of existing provincial revenue streams."

Hamilton stands an excellent chance for funding in this program. The city is proposing two lines for detailed study. They are the A Line from the waterfront to the airport and the B Line from Eastgate to University Plaza. You can see the outline of the feasibility study and fill out the comment form at: hamilton.ca/rapid-transit.

The immediate focus for us is whether we think that bus or light-rail rapid transit will better help Hamilton achieve the goals of the Transportation Master Plan, which include reducing the use of single-occupancy vehicles, reducing vehicle kilometres traveled by 20 per cent, increasing the use of public transit to 15 per cent, and being a catalyst to economic development and growth.

After initial study, I believe that a light-rail system along the B Line would best serve these goals. Light rail has a proven record of increasing ridership, averages more passengers per vehicle than a bus, is more handicapped accessible, and offers a quieter, smoother ride. In West Hamilton, it would be on a dedicated lane, exiting passengers onto a centre ramp in the Longwood to Cootes Drive section and then to sidewalk-curb ramps from Cootes Drive to University Plaza.

Light-rail transit would benefit West Hamilton by replacing polluting, noisy buses that crowd our streets, help to concentrate economic development along the Main West corridor and downtown, increase business assessments to help reduce the residential-tax burden, speed up travel to downtown, and make other neighbourhoods more accessible for students to live in and commute to campus.

Learn more about light rail for Hamilton at hamiltonlightrail.com.

Trucks Update

ROB PAYNE

As of this past Jan. 31, heavy trucks destined to McMaster University may no longer travel on our residential streets.

Thanks to the strong feedback from the community, as well as the leadership of Councillor Brian McHattie and city staff, McMaster has agreed not to pursue any extension of the temporary agreement beyond Jan. 31 to use residential streets for campus heavy truck traffic.

As a result of the AWWCA's active involvement, a new focus on collaborative solutions to traffic issues between the city and

the university has been established. Initial indications from these discussions are quite positive, with a focus on "win-win" ideas advocated by the AWWCA when the trucking issues first came to light in 2006.

The AWWCA is quite pleased that a more progressive planning process has been established. We are confident this will continue to result in benefits for all parties, and we commend McMaster and the city for their willingness to work more closely together.

Rob Payne is chair of the AWWCA's transportation committee.

Schools & Hospital NEWS

Our Community's Elementary Schools

AWWCA president John Wigle wrote to Councillor Brian McHattie on May 5 to summarize the preferences of the AWWCA regarding public elementary schools in Ainslie Wood and Westdale:

As you know, the provincial Ministry of Education has deemed both Dalewood Middle School and Prince Philip School (a primary school) "prohibitive to repair," meaning that repair costs are estimated to be above 65 per cent of the cost of building a new school. (Dalewood's were estimated to be 67 per cent.) Dalewood Recreation Centre, which shares the same building as Dalewood School and is owned by the City of Hamilton, is also in need of extensive upgrading. To make matters worse, enrolment at Prince Philip had also declined.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board trustee [and chair] Judith Bishop has informed us that, in its 2008 capital plan (hwdsb.on.ca), the board recommends construction of a new JK-8 school to replace Prince Philip and Dalewood, contingent upon Ministry-approved financing, particularly the approval of prohibitive-to-repair funding. Executive council is to undertake a community consultation to determine the new catchment areas, including the option of accommodating a French-immersion program in the new school and the potential for child-care facilities and partnerships for a municipally run recreation centre. The location of a possible new school has not been decided.

In the meantime, Ms. Bishop has helped to introduce a Mandarin program at Prince Philip that began in January. It is hoped this will stabilize enrolment there.

Ms. Bishop also said that if it is at all possible schools like Dalewood, which was purpose built as a middle school, should not be torn down, as they have features that are not provided in new schools, such as the specialized music room and art room and the auditorium.

To support walkability instead of bus-ing, we would prefer to keep all three schools—George R. Allan, Prince Philip, and Dalewood Middle School. We hope the city can help by renovating the Dalewood Recreation Centre, which is used by our schools, including Westdale Secondary School, as well as the community at large. The auditorium at Dalewood Middle School is also available to the community.

In summary, the AWWCA supports keeping both Dalewood and Prince Philip despite their prohibitive-to-repair rating. Our academically excellent, walkable public schools attract families and are an important component of keeping Ainslie Wood and Westdale stable and balanced communities.

*"Building community
block by block"*

Emergency Department Closure at MUMC

DR. ROMAN MARCH

Hamilton Health Sciences' announcement that it proposes closing the Emergency Department at McMaster University Medical Centre to all adults over 18 years of age has alarmed many citizens within the very large community of 2.3 million people served by HHS. The announcement of the plan created an explosion of activity among numerous groups within this community. An online poll at auwca.ca reported that 90 per cent of the 97 respondents would like the AWWCA to establish a fact-finding committee, and on that basis the ABC (access to best care) committee was formed in March. The committee is chaired by **Dr. Kenneth Ockenden**. Dr. Ockenden was an emergency physician from 1974 to 2004 at Hamilton General and Henderson General Hospitals and, after amalgamation, at MUMC; he was chief of emergency medicine at the General and Henderson for 14 years.

Councillors **Brian McHattie** and **Russ Powers** and others responded by working with the AWWCA board and HHS to hold numerous public meetings in the greater Hamilton area. Around 200 people turned out at Temple Anshe Sholom in Westdale on April 3 to hear from a panel of 12 medical personnel from HHS. The panel was led by HHS president and chief executive officer **Murray Martin**.

After presenting its proposals and the rationale for the changes in great detail to an attentive but largely skeptical audience, the panel was confronted by questions and statements from the floor. In particular, some audience members criticized what they considered a "top down" planning process that had not consulted with citizens who would be affected by the changes. Many of the questioners said they worried that transportation by ambulances to hospitals and emergency units beyond MUMC would delay critical care.

Mr. Martin said that, after meeting city



Lining up to ask questions of the panel at the April 3 meeting at Temple Anshe Sholom.
Photo: Janet Woodward

officials to talk about population-growth projections, HHS had decided the proposed urgent-care centre needs to be in the lower city, at a location on Main Street West.

Private discussions with some HHS panel members after the meeting revealed that HHS planners were astonished by the size and vehemence of the opposition to its plans. The ABC committee and the AWWCA board will continue to examine the many details of the HHS plan. The committee has collected a large number of responses from community members and is attempting to get answers. The committee will continue to inform residents about HHS plans to reorganize the delivery of health care in our community.

Dr. Roman March, retired associate professor of political science at McMaster University, is recording secretary of the ABC committee and an AWWCA member.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Swim Programs for All

The City of Hamilton's Dalewood Recreation Centre, 1150 Main St. W., has three swim programs for adults, both day and evening: advanced masters, beginner masters, and waterfit. In addition, there are adult, public (adults and children), and family swim times (those under 18 must be with an adult). The pool is open six days a week. Water activities are a great way to improve your fitness level. Information: Dalewood Recreation Centre, 905-546-4946, or myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/CityandGovernment/CultureandRecreation/Recreation/CentresPoolsArenas/Dalewood.

Welcome, Seniors and Retirees

The Westdale/West Hamilton Seniors and Retirees meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. at Grace Hall, Grace Lutheran Church, 1107 Main St. W. Programming includes cards, board games, shuffleboard, guest speakers, refreshments, and good conversation. Parking is available, and the building is handicapped accessible. New members are most welcome. Contacts are AWWCA members **Pat Barton**, 905-527-5137, and **Effie York**, 905-522-6256.

You are invited to join us for a cranberry colour cruise aboard the Wenonah II, Wednesday, Oct. 15. Start this day trip with a leisurely drive to Gravenhurst. Explore the Muskoka Steamship Museum before boarding the Wenonah II for a two-and-a-half hour lunch cruise. View the spectacular scenery from the deck of the ship, which features a dining room, three decks for passenger viewing, air conditioning, and an elevator.

After the cruise, visit the Muskoka Boat and Heritage Centre, including wooden boats, a full-sized "living" bow of a steamship, a grand-resort display, a boat builder's workshop, and North America's largest in-water display of antique and classic boats. Then depart for Johnson's Cranberry Marsh in Bala for a wagon-ride tour and tasting of treats and wine.

The cost per person is \$86, including a gratuity for the motorcoach driver of \$1 per person. Full payment is due Oct. 1. Make cheques payable to Westdale/West Hamilton Seniors and Retirees. Information: Marilyn, 905-522-6730.

Community Cleanups

The AWWCA's 7th Annual Community Cleanup

JANET WOODWARD

We are pleased to report on the successful expansion of the AWWCA's annual cleanup to celebrate Earth Day. On April 26, 56 community members pitched in. The weather was pleasant at 20 C with a lovely breeze; the forecast rain did not materialize. AWWCA members participated in other cleanups and tree plantings around Earth Day, including the tree



Volunteers at Haddon Avenue South station.

L to R: Harry Vanderzwagg, Earl Jerome, Linda Panton, Ralph Peacock. Absent from photo: Jeanne Bernard, Gary Cheeseman, John Sheeler, Heather Thomson.

Photo: Lorean Jerome

planting that took place at Princess Point about the same time as the AWWCA cleanup.

Congratulations to Our Trillium Award Winners

JANET WOODWARD

To mark the 32nd year of the beautification awards in 2007, 10 awards of excellence were given, one of which was presented to Westdale Reformed Church. In addition, 12 pink-trillium awards and 325 white-trillium awards were presented to property owners in the City of Hamilton. We congratulate the AWWCA members who won trillium awards in 2007:

Pink-trillium winner: **Alan and Joan McArthur** won their first pink-trillium award.

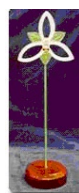
White-trillium winners: **Carol Davids** has won 10 white-trillium awards and two pink trilliums (her

first pink trillium, in 1993, was for winning three years in a row); **Alan and Joan McArthur**, ninth-time winners; **Stephen Plevak**, first-time winner; and **Robert and Sandra Spree**, third-time winners.

Volunteer judges look for properties

that have curb appeal, are well maintained, and have good design (harmony, balance, focal area, proportion, texture, and colour). White-trillium-award judging is done during the first three weeks of July. Two properties receiving the highest scores in each area are awarded the white-trillium award. The one with the highest score in each area is nominated for a pink trillium, one of which is awarded in each ward. Pink-trillium judging occurs during the first two weeks of August.

We salute the winners and all in our community who take pride in their gardens. Your actions improve the quality of life in our neighbourhood—one of the goals of the AWWCA.



White-trillium award
Copyright City of
Hamilton 2001



Pink-trillium award
Copyright City
of Hamilton 2001



Volunteers at Sanders Boulevard station.

L to R: Dr. John Attridge, Rebecca Low, Julian and Klaus Schultes, Betty Bechtel. Absent from photo: Jim Bechtel, Tom and Marion Bryner, Brian Coombes, Dylan and Ian Kolesnikoff, Tom Pirie, Cheryl Wickens, Bill Zsepeczky. Photo: Megan Coombes

AWWCA community cleanups were initiated and run by **Dmitri Malakhov** for five years while he was a student at Westdale Secondary School and then at McMaster University. He is now serving with the RCMP in Nunavut. Since his departure last year, I have organized the AWWCA cleanups to celebrate Earth Day. Dmitri, whose mother and sister participated in the cleanup, wrote to us from Nunavut May 5: "Congratulations. I am very happy to see that there were 56 volunteers. I wish I could have taken part in the cleanup."

Last year, in addition to the Churchill Park station, we introduced a cleanup station at Cootes Drive and Sanders Boulevard, supervised this year by AWWCA board member **Megan Coombes**.



Volunteers at Churchill Park station.

Front row L to R: Irene Petric, Shelli Eisenberg, Cathy Mansfield, Kate Cuff and sons J. C. and Greg, Janet Woodward. Back row L to R: Sheila Greenspan, Mona Levenstein, Olivia Petric, Vinnie Welsh, Councillor Brian McHattie, Arnold Beale, Mira Votakh, Irina Malakhova, Joe and Dylan Aiello. Absent from photo: Rita Bertoldi, Jane Evans, Tom Hurd.

The Churchill Park station was supervised this year by AWWCA board member **Lavinia Welsh**. Two new stations were introduced this year: on Haddon Avenue South, supervised by **Earl Jerome**, and in front of MacNeill Baptist Church, supervised by AWWCA board member **Carolyn Kinsley**.

Earl Jerome reported that two boys under the age of five, who live on Westwood Avenue, came out on their front veranda with their parents' urging, saying: "Thanks for cleaning up our neighbourhood on Earth Day." On April 27 AWWCA president **John Wigle** wrote: "Cary Kinsley was our fearless team leader yesterday. As usual she did an excellent job. Lisa Dodds and I were paired and finished our demanding route with 10 minutes to spare. Several homeowners came up to us during the



Volunteers at MacNeill Baptist Church station.

Front row L to R: Jay Parlar, Stephanie Corazza, Heather and Bev Wasmund. Back row L to R: Murray Babb, David Hitchcock, Lisa Dodds, John Wigle, Sue Waddington, Cameron Whitney. Absent from photo: Edith Gagnon. Photo: Carolyn Kinsley

We thank the **Clean City Liaison Committee** for the citywide co-ordination of **Pitch-In Hamilton** and for providing gloves and bags. But our biggest thanks go to all the volunteers who gave of their personal time on a lovely Saturday to make our community sparkle again.

6th Annual West Hamilton Rail Trail Cleanup

RICHARD PALMER

On May 3, a rainy Saturday morning, 16 hardy souls met to once again clean up the Rail Trail that runs from Rifle Range Road to Stroud Road. The weather co-operated until the rain started, during the last 30 minutes of the clean-up. While we found the trail cleaner than last year, because a group of McMaster students had started the job just before we arrived, we finished the job with the help of a four-wheel dolly and a lot of slugging. The piles of garbage were once again moved to intersections for pickup by the city. On the way back, we detoured and cleaned Ward Avenue from Emerson Street to the parking lot behind Fortino's. We finished wet but satisfied with a job well done.

Councillor Brian McHattie joined us and reported that discussions are still ongoing with CP Rail regarding the community's interest in converting the abandoned rail line into an extended Rail Trail across Ward 1. He reassured us the money is waiting to complete the trail. This might be the year we get an agreement.

Our cleanup was coordinated by the AWWCA and St. George's Reformed Episcopal Church with the support of Fortino's and the City of Hamilton Pitch-In program.

We thank all who volunteered and Fortino's for the complimentary soft drinks after the cleanup.

Richard Palmer is a member of St. George's Reformed Episcopal Church on Emerson Avenue.



Rail Trail volunteers

Front row L to R: Joseph Barranger, Carlo Fletcher, June Fausto. Middle row L to R: Linda Palmer, Murray Babb, Sandra Bentley, Barb Mansfield, Gillian and John Ferns, Patrick Moore, Brian Fearnley, Jean Wessel. Back row L to R: Kenneth Sherman, Glenn Fletcher. Absent from photo: Jeannie Bernard, Councillor Brian McHattie.

Photo: Richard Palmer

Graffiti & Signs in Our COMMUNITY

Graffiti: The Bad News and the Good News

KENNETH OCKENDEN

The warm weather is here and with it the onset of graffiti, so summer means we have more cleaning. During the winter there is less vandalism, but graffiti is harder to remove. That is the bad news.

The good news is the city is recognizing the adverse effects of graffiti and beginning to take strong steps to control it. Councillor Brian McHattie has been very supportive, and efforts at cleaning up seem to be developing citywide. Locally, the Hamilton Police

Service has provided logistical help with maps and supplies as well as recruitment of volunteers. Canada Post has also helped, and we appear to be on the verge of obtaining permission to clean surfaces for other organizations. A local school plans to offer removal of graffiti as one way for students to fulfill their community service. *The Hamilton Spectator* described in a March 29 article how three graffiti vandals will spend a portion of their summer removing graffiti rather than entering the judicial system.

As always we can use more volunteers; there are still "orphan" boxes and areas where only a few boxes are covered. A handout explaining the cleanup process is available, and new maps indicating all our area mailboxes will be ready soon. If you can help, please contact me at 905-528-4805 or ken.inthecastle@gmail.com.

Q & A—The New Sign Bylaw

LOREEN JEROME

Question:

AWWCA member **Jim Waddington** wrote on April 2: *Many times last summer my wife, Sue, and I cut down the posters along Sterling Street. We have been lax over the winter. Twice during the first week of March we removed all the illegal signs along Sterling Street and the centre of Westdale. It took about four hours. Soon after, many of them were replaced on King Street. Last week we removed another 40 illegal signs. It is particularly annoying that they are also taping them to our new lampposts. As far as I can see on the city's website, it is illegal to post such signs except on designated places. Are there any designated places in Westdale?*

Answer:

The short answer is that poster locations have not yet been approved.

Posters are regulated under By-law 06-243, "A By-law Respecting

Signs and Other Advertising Devices Within the City of Hamilton." Section 5.12 states: *No Person shall erect, locate, or display a Poster except in accordance with Schedule "B" and the general regulations applicable under this By-law. Notwithstanding Schedule "B" and any general regulations applicable under this Bylaw, the City of Hamilton may remove and dispose of Posters without notice or compensation to any person.*

Schedule B states that posters may be placed under the following conditions:

- Paper or cardboard only
- Maximum size 22 by 28 centimetres (approximately 8 ½ by 11 inches)
- Only affixed by tape
- Maximum one poster per approved location
- Maximum display period of 21 days and not more than three days after the end of an advertised event

Loreen Jerome is an AWWCA board member and treasurer. She and AWWCA board member Carolyn Kinsley were instrumental in suggesting improvements to the new sign bylaw.

City Hall NEWS

Ward 1 Chedoke-Cootes: Councillor's Report

BRIAN MCHATTIE

Happy summer solstice! The plants in the community are out in full bloom, reminding us of the original City Beautiful design of this area.

I would like to update you on my work in Ainslie Wood and Westdale and throughout the city.

You will recall that I was pursuing the idea of the city clearing all sidewalks of snow, with the cost added to homeowners' property taxes. We have received good

community support, but more investigation is required: The next step is for our purchasing department to request potential contractors to provide detailed costing and methods of operation (i.e., how quickly they could clear the walks after a snowfall). With that information in hand I will canvas Ward 1 constituents again and make a decision in time for the 2008-9 snow season.

The spring proactive bylaw enforcement was successful in making our area a better place to live, with speeded-up enforcement



Councillor Brian McHattie

processes for long grass and weeds and property standards. A Community Liaison Committee involving the AWWCA, the McMaster Students Union, and others is presently being set up to work on a new rental-housing licensing bylaw. This could require landlords to have detailed property-standards, parking, fire, and noise-prevention plans, with city inspections supported by a licensing fee.

Accommodating 449 students, the West Village purpose-built student housing on Main Street West by all accounts is a success. LEED® certification is expected soon. There is a sense that fewer students are now living in neighbourhood houses.

The proposal for a similar 550-student housing complex at 17 Ewen Road continues to make its way through the city planning process, and a public meeting is likely this fall.

We are beginning discussions around development of a new vision for Churchill Park, with meetings on this throughout 2008. Many of you know the Churchill Fields lawn-bowling club closed last winter; we will be considering new uses for that part of the park.

Below are some quick updates on my citywide efforts:

1. Continued pursuit of a CBC radio station for Hamilton; we await the Government of Canada's response on the Federal Standing Committee of Canadian Heritage's review of CBC, which contains many references to my presentation to the standing committee.
2. As president of City Housing Hamilton, I am pleased to announce the opening of a heritage replica building called the Gore Building, just east of King and John Streets. We are working on a second downtown housing project, along with a co-op artists' live-work project.
3. As council's representative on the Hamilton Round Table on Poverty Reduction, I encourage you to review our annual report at hamiltonpoverty.ca.
4. At the end of June, we hope to have an agreement with LIUNA/Hi-Rise Developments on rehabilitating the historic Lister Block for city office space, with a significant seniors' housing building behind, giving the downtown (and our tax-assessment base) a real boost.
5. A key part of our transportation system, in my view, needs to include a light-rail transit system, starting with a downtown-to-McMaster link; for images on what this would look like, visit hamiltonlightrail.com.

Please visit my website at brianmchattie.ca for more details on my City Hall committee work and projects listed above. I invite you to communicate with me at City Hall at 905-546-2416 or bmchattie@hamilton.ca. Have a great summer!

Streamlined Procedure for Bylaw Enforcement

IRA ROSEN

News of the streamlined enforcement procedure for long grass, garbage, and debris was enthusiastically received by our members. The news came from **Councillor Brian McHattie's** office on April 18 and was forwarded to members on e-mail that day. Here are the details provided to us:

The new procedure has been put in place to enforce By-law 03-118 (short title: Yard Waste and Maintenance By-law) respecting litter, yard waste, and property maintenance (which includes garbage, debris, and long grass). It aims to reduce compliance time from a maximum of 24 days to a maximum of 11 days. In addition, staff plan to be consistent in laying charges and applying fees for service.

The following outlines the new procedure, once a complaint is received:

1. An officer visits the site within 24-48 hours.
2. If a violation exists, the officer posts an order to comply at the property.
3. The officer also leaves a "fees for service" warning letter at the property with the owner or occupant.
4. Staff are suggesting that the officer allow the property owner 72 hours to achieve compliance on an order to comply for long grass and three to five days for garbage, but this will be discretionary, based on variables such as the lot size and amount of waste.
5. The officer re-inspects the property when the order expires.
6. If the property is in non-compliance, the officer applies a "fee for service," arranges to have a contractor complete the work, and lays charges against the owner or occupant, if appropriate.

We would like to thank staff for their work in developing this new procedure.

Note that this is a pilot procedure and is subject to change. Staff will be evaluating the new procedure over the next couple of months to determine whether further changes are necessary.

To report long grass or other property-standards violations, contact property standards' customer service at 905-546-2782 or standardslicensing@hamilton.ca. By-law 03-118 can be viewed at: myhamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/9A2E7064-DCD0-4FF9-AB77-C723400904C1/0/03118Backyard.pdf.

Ira Rosen is the AWWCA's vice-president and bylaw liaison (property standards and parking).

AWWCA Requests City Data

JOHN WIGLE

Since the formation of the AWWCA, we have been communicating with the city about our unique concerns as a town-and-gown community. Ainslie Wood and Westdale have recurring issues created by a small percentage of irresponsible absentee landlords and their renters. Excessive noise, disruptive behavior, and parking and property-standards violations all require additional policing, bylaw enforcement, and inspections by the city fire department.

While anecdotally it appears that progress has been made to reduce excessive noise and property-standards and parking violations, through initiatives such as the city's much-

appreciated proactive enforcement, progress is not currently expressed and reported using actual data. The AWWCA has requested this data for several years, but we have received nothing to date.

On April 22 I wrote to **Marty Hazell**, director of the city's parking and bylaw services, requesting that bylaw-enforcement data for our area be shared on a consistent month-to-month basis, by category and community. This data would help to measure our achievements, establish some best practices, and assist us all in moving forward together. Mr. Hazell responded on April 23, saying: "In response to your request for data/information for by-law violations I can tell you that I support this request, and we are currently working on a process to share this information regularly by Ward with each Council member on a regular basis. . . . We expect this regular reporting process to be up and running in the next couple of months."

The association will continue to pursue data sharing and will update our members as we receive it. I acknowledge and thank the ongoing efforts of **Lisa Dodds** and **Ira Rosen**, our able vice-presidents, for their hard work on bylaw matters.

survived with smoke inhalation and burns to his arms.

The AWWCA has long been advocating a citywide licensing program for rental housing in order to set and regulate more stringent safety standards for tenants in our community.

Last summer, AWWCA vice-president **Ira Rosen**, in partnership with the McMaster Students Union, McMaster University, and the Westdale Business Improvement Area, approached Hamilton Emergency Services to do a fire-safety audit of a sample of detached houses in our community, both rental and owner occupied. Ward 1 Councillor **Brian McHattie** acted as liaison for these meetings. The audit began in September and has been completed.

Mr. McHattie forwarded the report of the audit on May 20 and we thank **Jim Kay**, chief of Hamilton Emergency Services, for his work. Following is the report's summary: "Results of the pilot project would appear to confirm that the houses in the study area do not present an undue fire safety risk and that 95% (38 of 40) of the houses inspected were found to be in full compliance with the Ontario Fire Code based on their current occupancy. The compliance rate between occupancies was equivalent, with the exception of the duplex category which varied due to the Fire Code requirement for an electrical inspection which is specific only to duplex occupancies within the Code. There is no equivalent project data in a different area of the City to use as a comparator for this pilot project's data. Based on other inspection and enforcement activities conducted by HES-Fire, the 95% compliance rate would be considered to be a favourable result." Although relieved by the results, we think that single houses with multiple tenants should also require safety inspections. The full report is available at: myhamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/43B942DAC1B5-4A81-9AEE-0F208BEC573B/0/May21HES08010ResultsofPilotProjectinAinslieWoodandWestdaleNeighbourhoods.pdf

Tenant-Occupied Residential Housing

Licensing HMOs

At TownGown World (towntownworld.com) there is a lively discussion about limits to occupancy of houses in near-campus communities, including London and Oshawa. This is part of a discussion series about licensing HMOs (house in multiple occupation), looking at examples from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The site also includes a piece by the AWWCA's immediate past president **Rob Payne**, at towntownworld.com/hmooccupancylimits.



Tragic Fire in Our Community

JOHN WIGLE

In an e-mail to members March 8, the AWWCA expressed our condolences to the families and friends of the two young adults and three children who died in the March 1 fire at 129 Broadway Ave. We also let our members know we made a

donation on their behalf to the Hamilton Professional Fire Fighters Association in memory of Josh Lukas, Melissa Den Hollander, and her three little girls, Emma, Ella, and Alana, all under the age of five. Her partner, Richard Griffin,



Because
we care

Office of the Fire Marshal to Add Rental Housing to Statistical Database

ROB PAYNE

As co-chair of the Town and Gown Association of Ontario and president of the AWWCA, I attended frequent meetings with our local and provincial fire experts during 2005. It became apparent that risk assessment was done on a statistical basis, but that tenant-occupied residential housing (including student rental housing) was not captured as a separate category. As a result, it could not be statistically determined whether these types of residential properties were at greater risk of fire than owner-occupied homes.

TGAO sent a letter to the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal in January 2006 asking for an expansion of the statistical categories.

I am pleased to announce that TGAO received a letter from the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal in March, informing us that fire reporting will include non-owner-occupied designations such as student housing. Data collection will begin in 2009 and will be used for analysis in 2010.

Rob Payne is immediate past president of the AWWCA.

On March 14, the day after the fire marshal's message was sent to members, AWWCA president emerita **Phyllis Tresidder** wrote: "Bravo! Great work everyone. This is a tremendous step forward at the provincial level. With the recent Oshawa licensing bylaw following on changes to the Municipal Housing Act, we are making slow but steady progress in regulating the health and safety standards of Ontario student housing."



**Working Together for a
Healthy Community**

Investors Beware

Jennifer Kleven, manager of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, reported that on March 13 there were 425 active for-rent advertisements on their website (in all categories and locations). They ranged from three to eight bedrooms for rent. Of the 425 advertisements, 72 were for entire houses. Ms. Kleven says: "It is our opinion that things are pretty much the same as last year, and the year before . . . there is still more housing available than students to fill them. We continue to share that message with landlords when they call and complain their house is empty (or near-empty)." Ms. Kleven also noted they have seen an increase in students wanting the OCRC to review their leases. The OCRC advises students to go back to landlords and request items necessary to fulfill the lease requirements. For instance, if the students agree in their lease to mow the lawn, they need to ensure the landlord provides a lawn mower. She points out that students have become more aware of rental issues and more selective when choosing a house to rent.



Excellent buy for permanent residents. But, investors beware.

Living in Our CAMPUS TOWN

West Village Student Condos: Exceeding Our Expectations!

JANET WOODWARD

In the autumn 2006 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we published an article by **Tommy Piribauer**, then marketing and community-relations officer of Dundurn Property Management, about plans for the development of the West Village Student Condos.

The building was completed in September 2007, and in February, 22 AWWCA board members and block representatives toured the building. We are grateful to Mr. Piribauer for arranging the two tours.

Acting as guides were **Robert Manherz**, president of Dundurn Capital Partners Inc., the developers of West Village Condos; **Carlo DiGiacchino**, vice-



Robert Manherz explains the solar installation to some tour participants Feb. 6.
Photo: Janet Woodward

president of business development; **Andrea Dowell**; and Mr. Piribauer.

The energy-modeling consultant for the Green Building Rating System LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental



West Village student condos.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Design) believes the project is on track for LEED® platinum certification, the highest of the four levels. Mr. Manherz expects to hear soon. He pointed out that “the solar installation on the roof is the largest installation of evacuated heat pipe solar technology in the world. It is the most energy efficient in the market.”

After the Feb. 6 tour, block representative **Marlene Castura** wrote to the owners: “Since my home and property back onto the West Village Student Condos, I had many concerns as I watched the building being built. To date, I have been impressed. There is no noise coming from this building at night or on weekends. The building looks first class, with expanses of windows in the common areas of the building. I appreciate the uniform white vertical treatments in the individual units. This is a great student building where I would not hesitate to send my own children. The environment encourages them to be safe, mature, and successful in their studies. I hope your high standards will encourage other developers to follow suit. We need developers who are willing to

invest this much in our environment. I enjoyed the tour this afternoon and the lunch provided. Thank you.”

After the Feb. 13 tour, honorary board member **Betty Bechtel** said: “It was a super tour. Some of us jokingly said we’d like to move in. It was interesting to see all of the energy-saving ideas. I think everyone was impressed with the size and



Feb. 13 tour participants in the games room.

fittings of the apartments. The views, looking east over the city and west over the Dundas Valley, were breathtaking. And it was nice to connect with the people on the tour.”

On Feb. 14 block representative **Michael Ladouceur** wrote: “My wife and I toured the West Village Student Condos yesterday evening, and I must say we were both very impressed with the quality of the building and the courtesy and efficiency of the staff we met. The developer has truly thought out and planned this facility for student use. Of note were the exercise areas, the laundry facilities, the communal TV rooms, the quiet study rooms, and the games room. We were also impressed with the presence of security cameras and the anecdotes about how these have already translated into more secure and accountable behaviour. The policies and procedures in the residence make good sense, and we wish they could be applied to student rentals in Westdale. The ‘green’ technologies used in this building were outstanding and very progressive.”

Congratulations to the developers. They have reason to be proud of what they have accomplished; the building is impressive in every way.

Mac Students Recognized by Our Community

**LISA DODDS AND
SERGEANT JO-ANN SAVOIE**

On April 30, at a gathering in the marketplace of McMaster’s student centre, students nominated by members of the community were recognized for their contributions to Ainslie Wood and Westdale. Each received a letter of appreciation signed by the mayor, the university president, the student-union president, and the chief of police.

The program was launched in April 2005 by the AWWCA, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Police Service, McMaster Students Union, McMaster University, and Westdale Business Improvement Area.

In making her nominations, AWWCA member **Julia Hutchison** wrote on Feb. 11: “In all the 25 years that I have lived here I have never had neighbours who are so willing to help me shovel snow. We have had four major storms this winter, and every time the city plows in my driveway the young men next door come and shovel me out. Special thanks to Jason, Henry, Derek, and Jonathan from a very grateful neighbour. I’m glad there is a program to reward students who make good neighbours. They do add a certain vitality to the neighbourhood.”

Shelli Eisenberg, an AWWCA block representative, wrote on Feb. 2: “The lovely girls across the street are a really terrific bunch of students, always smiling and friendly. They had all their snow cleared up beautifully yesterday. I can’t



Back row, L to R: MSU president Ryan Moran; West Town crime manager Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie; AWWCA vice-president, bylaw liaison (noise) and police liaison, Lisa Dodds; McMaster’s associate vice-president and dean of students Phil Wood. Front row, L to R: students Jill Wiegand, Alicia Campbell, Daniel Langdon. Students absent from photo: Henry Al-Koraishi, Carly Cermak, Alison Christie, Charlotte Farish, Derek Jansen, Johnathan Lamnan, Shannon McIntyre, Sara Praetorius, Bill Spicer, Jason Stahl.

Photo: Janet Woodward

speak highly enough about them—warm, friendly, helpful, and genuinely kind girls. They treat me like their mother. I am sorry they are moving after this school year; I am really going to miss them.”

We congratulate the 13 students nominated this year. We will be seeking nominations for the 2008-9 school year in the early part of 2009.

Varsity NEWS

The Off-Campus Experience

**SASHA RANA,
SCSN DIRECTOR**



Living off campus can be quite the experience for many McMaster students. There are numerous aspects for us to consider when moving out of residence in our later years of university: city bylaws, community events, volunteer opportunities, leasing-agreement stipulations, and simple community respect. The newly launched Off-Campus Experience helps students get the most out of living on our own. This includes taking advantage of all opportunities and fostering positive relations between students and permanent residents.

OCE is an umbrella organization for the Society of Off-Campus Students, the Student Community Support Network, and the Off-Campus Resource Centre. SOCS looks after the social side of things, promoting fun activities and events for students residing off campus. SCSN offers many opportunities to volunteer

with community organizations and fosters positive relations between students and residents, with the goal of introducing and involving students and community residents to make everyone's living situation enjoyable. Any questions or concerns about lease agreements can be cleared up by a student's visit to the OCRC, where the friendly staff help us find suitable accommodations and clarify any confusion to ensure our off-campus living experience is comfortable. These three services, SOCS, SCSN, and OCRC, have now come together to provide a one-stop shop for students living off campus. OCE meets regularly to discuss issues, opportunities, and events that surround off-campus living and is discussing plans for the coming year to encourage student and resident interaction in the community. Ideas such as a Welcome Week barbecue and an Acts of Kindness Week are in the works. Further details will be offered in the future. Visit macoce.com.

PJ Parade 2008

JANET WOODWARD

The pajama-parade committee formed in 2005 continues to meet. It includes both the president and vice-president admin-

istration of McMaster Students Union, the president of McMaster's Society of Off-Campus Students, MSU director of campus events **Christina Burns**, and AWWCA members **MaryAnne Duncan** and **Janet Woodward**.

In the 2006 autumn issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we provided an overview of new initiatives in the 2006 pajama parade. These were developed in response to residents' concerns. One of the problems raised was the need to reroute the parade away from streets where upper-year students live. This was tried in 2007, and the new route was largely successful except for one short section that includes a large number of rental properties.

In meetings held since the 2007 parade we dealt with two areas needing improvement: policing and the parade route. Former West Town crime manager **Sergeant Tim O'Keefe** attended the Nov. 8, 2007, meeting to discuss ways to improve policing at the parade in September 2008. Current crime manager **Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie** plans to attend the June meeting. Given the difficult section in last year's route, we explored possibilities for changing it. Before finalizing this year's route, we contacted as many AWWCA members on the proposed streets as we could reach. Almost all were in favour of the parade passing by their property, and some enthusiastically supported the change. On that basis, the MSU proceeded with an application for a route change for 2008, and it has been approved, as follows:

1. Parade exits campus at Sterling Street entrance
2. Proceeds on the north side of Sterling Street
3. North on Dalewood Crescent
4. East on Paisley Avenue North
5. South on Dromore Crescent to Sterling Street
6. Returns to campus on the south side of Sterling Street

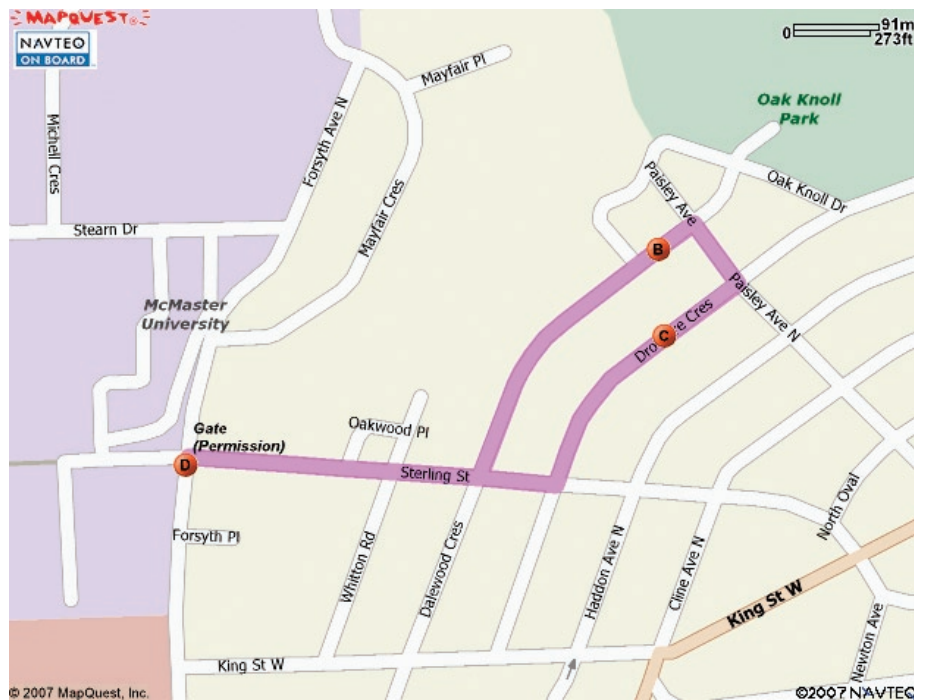
This year's parade takes place Wednesday, Sept. 3, and we hope many

permanent residents come out to welcome the new students. The parade's focus will continue to be environmental, and plans are to make that theme even stronger. The popular Dixieland band is expected to return, and other additions and improvements are being explored by the committee. Once again, the AWWCA will have a booth with banner. This year it will be at Oakwood Park, where Mary Anne Duncan and her family will hand out AWWCA literature and Because We Care stickers.

We thank community members for their feedback and welcome suggestions and comments.



2008 Pajama-Parade Route



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MacSHARE Launched

IRA ROSEN

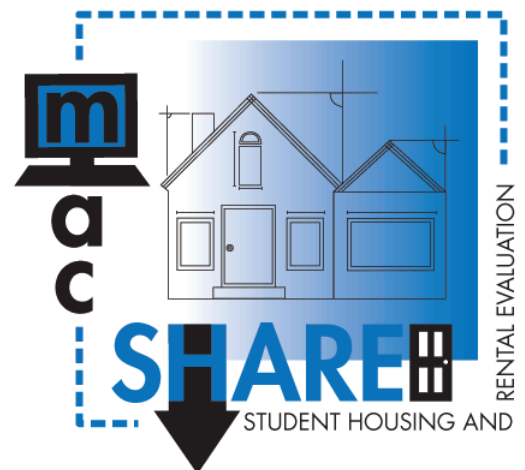
McMaster Students Union launched a new website March 7 that will help students make informed decisions about off-campus housing.

Called McMaster Student Housing and Rental Evaluation (MacSHARE), it allows students to review apartments, rental houses, and rental rooms anonymously to help their peers who may be looking for accommodation.

Using a scale ranging from poor to excellent, students can rate a property based on its appearance, proximity to amenities, access to parking, and maintenance. The survey also allows students to rate their landlords on the basis of communication, competence, and professionalism. Landlords are exempt if their properties are listed with the Rental Accountability Program of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre.

While only students of McMaster University may fill out the property evaluation, reviews are open for all to view (www.msu.mcmaster.ca/macshare).

The AWWCA applauds this new service. We hope it will lead to properties that are better cared for and safer for students, two of the goals of the AWWCA.



News from the Blues

West Town Crime Managers Come and Go

LISA DODDS

In January we said farewell to **Sergeant Tim O'Keefe**, who served as crime manager for our area for the past 14 months. Said Sgt. O'Keefe: "I had a great time working with the AWWCA and the university and all the other stakeholders in Westdale. I'm looking forward to getting back into the forensics branch; I have devoted almost 15 years of my career to the discipline. I will miss the community interaction that I feel is very important for us to do our jobs properly. I will miss your steady updates on community happenings, but I will always remember my time as the West Town crime manager." The AWWCA will miss working with Sgt. O'Keefe. He had a great rapport with everyone in the community. We thank him for his commitment and for working with all of us in Ainslie Wood/Westdale to keep these communities safe and a great place to live. We also thank him for helping to make such a smooth transition in getting to know our new crime manager for the AWWCA area, **Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie**. Sgt. Savoie took over in January and has already become an integral part of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community "team."

For the past 11 years **Sgt. Savoie** has been a police officer in patrol, recruiting, and central lockup (custody). She was also a senior officer in the Canadian Armed Forces before retiring in December 2006 as a major with 19 years of full-time and part-time service. While serving with the Canadian Armed Forces, Sgt. Savoie was awarded the Canadian Forces Decoration, as well as the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal.

Sgt. Savoie said: "Giving back to my community is extremely important to me. I have served as an executive officer for the Ontario Women in Law Enforcement, and I now sit on the board of trustees. I have also served on several City of Hamilton commit-



Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie.

Photo: Lisa Dodds

tees, including the Mayor's Committee Against Racism, the Status of Women, Keep Hamilton Clean Committee, and the Trillium Awards Program. Most recently I have joined the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Community Care Committee. This committee's mandate is to relieve poverty by food-share initiatives and establishing a nutrition program for Ryerson School."

Sgt. Savoie lives in Hamilton with her husband, Paul, a tactical officer with Peel Regional Police, and their English bulldog, Archie. She is in her final year of completing her master of arts in leadership at Royal Roads University in Victoria, B.C.

"I look forward to the year ahead," said Sgt. Savoie, "as we work together in resolving property issues and reducing crime."

The AWWCA welcomes Sgt. Savoie!

Lisa Dodds is the AWWCA's vice-president, bylaw liaison (noise), and police liaison.

Beat Officers in Our Community

The beat officers in our community are **Christine Bezeau** (currently on maternity leave), **Alan Ing**, **Vince Kikas**, **Mike Kowalchuk**, **Denise Leonard**, **Walter Niblock**, **Robert Otto**, and **Steve Wowk**.

Free Home-Security Inspection

If you are interested, members of the Hamilton Police Service Auxiliary will visit your home for a free Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design inspection, which is similar to a home-security audit. Contact Officer Robert McKinlay, 905-546-4929 or rmckinlay@hamiltonpolice.on.ca.

Members' NEWS

President's Report

JOHN WIGLE



John Wigle

Photo: Janet Woodward

I am happy to report to you on the work of the AWWCA since our annual general meeting last September when I became president. The AWWCA continues to focus on a number of key issues that directly affect our membership. These topics are covered in more depth in articles elsewhere in this issue.

1. Purpose-built student housing: The new West Village student housing at the old CNIB site was completed last September and is now home to 449

students. **Councillor Brian McHattie** has advised the board there are a number of other proposals for more purpose-built housing in our community. The board will continue to focus on ensuring any further proposals for this type of housing meet proper design-planning rationales for such things as scale, location, and density. For our members who want to gain a greater understanding of this issue, there has been a recent discussion of the topic on TownGown World (towngownworld.com).

2. Truck traffic: Heavy truck traffic destined for McMaster University will no longer travel through our community. Our safety concerns were seriously considered and acted upon by Mr. McHattie and city staff. We are grateful for their efforts.

3. Neighbourhood primary schools: We continue to work with various interested members to advocate for and help develop a proactive plan for our primary schools. Mr. McHattie's office has taken a leading role for our neighbourhood group.

4. Licensing rental properties: The AWWCA has long advocated a more formal structure for improving tenant safety in residential rental properties. We are continuing to work closely with Mr. McHattie's office to provide information and input. Oshawa and London, Ontario, are moving forward quickly to develop a formal licensing program that, among other things, will restrict the number of tenants to four (Oshawa) or five (London).

We expect to report more on this issue in the next newsletter. For those members interested in a more detailed knowledge of this issue, see the discussion at towngownworld.com.

5. Student property-review program launched: The AWWCA is pleased the McMaster Students Union has recently launched a program called MacSHARE that allows students to rate the quality of their off-campus housing. The AWWCA has encouraged the MSU to develop such a program over the last five years. It is satisfying to see it move forward.

6. Loss of adult Emergency Department at McMaster: Hamilton Health Sciences recently publicized its proposal for a dramatic reorganization of the city's delivery of health services. There are a number of positives for our community in this proposal. However, the proposal to eliminate emergency services to adults (and presumably McMaster students) at McMaster has many of our members concerned. As a result, we have formed a fact-finding committee to gain a more complete understanding of this issue. We are fortunate to have AWWCA member **Dr. Kenneth Ockenden** chairing this committee and the AWWCA's immediate past president, **Rob Payne**, as the committee's communications contact.

I would like to thank all who volunteer their time for the betterment of our community. We are happy to tell you that, for the first time in our 10-year history, all AWWCA board positions are filled; on Jan. 7 **Angela Tirone** was appointed recording secretary. And on March 2 we had a record 549 paid-up members. We appreciate the new volunteers and encourage more to become involved. Please contact me at 905-639-1052, ext. 232, or wiglej@simpsonwigle.com to volunteer.

Newsletter and Community Appreciation

Dec. 10, 2007, **Irene Peacock**: "Congratulations on the professional job done on your autumn 2007 *Neighbourhood News & Views*. Your format was excellent, and articles were presented in an interesting and informative manner . . . truly worthy of a Pulitzer Prize. Many thanks for your efforts from a resident of West Hamilton for the last 52 years."

Jan. 31, **Mona Levenstein**, block representative: "I just had to pass on to you my congratulations on producing such a fine neighbourhood newsletter. As I was rereading it last night I felt great pride and encouragement that so many people have devoted their considerable efforts to improve our community. I was reminded by Ruthann Stanhope's wonderful article of all the reasons I have loved Westdale over the years. I also moved here in 1972. I know appropriate recognition for your hard work is not always forthcoming but my husband, Harvey, and I greatly appreciate what you do."

AWWCA Website in Good Hands

JOHN WIGLE

For the past two years **Michael Tan** served on the AWWCA board, providing leadership and oversight for the development of the AWWCA's website, launched September 2006. In February Michael resigned from the board due to increased demands of his work, which requires frequent travel. He recommended to the board that we approach **Jay Parlar** to fill his position. Having created and maintained the AWWCA website for two years, Jay is perfectly suited to replace Michael. We appointed him to the board on Feb. 4.

Jay moved to Barclay Street in Westdale South at age six and attended George R. Allan from Grade 2. He grew up loving

Barclay Street and lived there until he was a teenager, at which time his family moved to Dundas. Three years ago, when Jay and his bride, Mary Ellen, were looking for a house, they were happy to purchase one on the same street on which he grew up. Jay is a student at McMaster University, completing his PhD dissertation in software engineering.

Jay said: "Since launching the website, *awwca.ca* has attracted an average of 20 unique visitors a day. This summer we plan to launch a variety of new features, focusing on interactivity and increased usability."

Searching for an article, topic, word, or picture at *awwca.ca* is easier now with a new Google™ search on the top left of

each web page, added by Jay in April. The search is restricted to the AWWCA site. Try it!

We thank Michael for his contribution and welcome Jay to the board.



Jay Parlar and his wife, Mary Ellen, at last summer's police-sponsored barbecue in Churchill Park.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Women of Distinction

We congratulate AWWCA members honoured May 28 at the YWCA's 2008 Women of Distinction awards at the Hamilton Convention Centre: **Judith Bishop** received the lifetime achievement award for her service with numerous groups, and **Karyn Callaghan** received the award in the arts, entertainment, and creative-energy category for her work merging art and early childhood education.

In Memoriam

The AWWCA extends its sympathy to the family of Shelagh Snider, who died on May 13. Shelagh, an AWWCA member since September 2001, was a strong supporter of our community. She was one of the founders of the Westdale Business Improvement Area and was instrumental in the startup of the Campus Town Association. We will miss her.



We've Grown

The First AWWCA newsletter, published in the Spring of 1999, contained four pages. This issue of Neighbourhood News & Views is 32 pages—our biggest ever. The newsletter reflects just one of the many ways we've grown as an association over the past 10 years.

Join Us

The AWWCA board of directors holds its monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. Members and guests are welcome to attend by prior arrangement. Contact John Wigle at 905-523-8775 or wiglej@simpsonwigle.com for the meeting location and information.

The AWWCA is a volunteer, nonprofit association with the mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community environment and the quality of life for all residents, and to organize, communicate, lobby, and pursue the needs of the members of the association. The AWWCA newsletter, *Neighbourhood News & Views*, is distributed to members twice a year and supplemented by news sent by e-mail.

Opinions expressed in the newsletter

© 2008, Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc.

are those of the writers unless otherwise specified and do not necessarily represent the views of the AWWCA. Submissions welcomed. Please send all news, story ideas, and photographs (no Polaroids please) to:

AWWCA

1063 King Street West, Suite 221
Hamilton, Ontario
L8S 4S3

GENERAL INQUIRIES

905-526-9101 or 905-526-1714

WEBSITE awwca.ca

NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR

Janet Woodward

COPY EDITOR

Carolyn Kinsley

DESIGN

Bob Edmonds

LAYOUT

Lynne Desjardins

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Malcolm Horsnell

Spring 2008



Useful Websites

Architecture Hamilton: architecturehamilton.com

AWWCA: awwca.ca

AWWCA bylaw complaints: awwca.ca/initiatives/initiative/municipal-bylaws

City of Hamilton: hamilton.ca

Councillor Brian McHattie: brianmchattie.ca

Federation of Citizens' Associations: fca-fac.ca

Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario: urbanneighbourhoods.ca

Fire, Hamilton Emergency Services: hamilton.ca/fire

H Magazine: hmag.ca

Hamilton's Event Calendar: hcal.ca

HammerBoard: hammerboard.ca

Hamilton Police Services: hamiltonpolice.on.ca/hps

Hamiltonians for Progressive Development: progressivedevelopment.ca

Helping local communities achieve more autonomy: localgovernment.ca

McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre: macocho.com

Ontario Greenbelt Alliance: greenbelt.ca

Ontario Professional Planners Institute: ontarioplanners.on.ca

Ontario Smart Growth Network: greenontario.org/osgn

Raise the Hammer: raisethehammer.org/index.asp

Town and Gown Association of Ontario: tgao.ca

TownGown World: towngownworld.com

Urban League of London: ul.london.on.ca

Westdale Business Improvement Area: westdalevillage.ca

Useful Numbers

**Abandoned shopping carts:**

The Barn: 905-523-5044

Fortino's (Rifle Range store): 905-308-9045, press 0

Animals injured or in distress: 905-574-3433, press 2

Assessments: Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, Hamilton,
1-866-296-6722

Barking dogs: 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Building permits: If in doubt about a building permit for a renovation site, contact Councillor Brian McHattie, 905-546-2416, or bmchattie@hamilton.ca; if there is no permit, file a complaint with him and copy his assistant, Nikola Patti, npatti@hamilton.ca

City Hall: 905-546-CITY (2489)*; if you know the extension, call 905-546-2424

Councillor Brian McHattie: 905-546-2416 or bmchattie@hamilton.ca

Crime Stoppers (to report a crime anonymously): 1-800-222-8477*

Fire, Hamilton Emergency Services (Fire and Fire Prevention Division): 905-546-2424, ext. 1380

Garbage, waste management: 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Graffiti:

Graffiti in progress: 911*

Graffiti on Canada Post boxes and Adopt-a-Box program: Ken Ockenden 905-528-4805 or ken.inthecastle@gmail.com

Graffiti on street signs: 905-546-4376*

Graffiti on public property: 905-546-CITY (2489)*

Graffiti on private property: 905-546-4925*

Hot line: 905-546-4723*

McMaster University, Office of Public Relations, Community Help Line: 905-525-9140, ext. 27305

Noise infractions: For noise in progress call police at 905-546-4925* or the city's municipal-law-enforcement department at 905-546-2782, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; after hours, 905-546-CITY (2489)

Parking infractions: 905-540-6000* (you need to call while the vehicle is in violation for the vehicle to be ticketed)

Park permits: 905-546-2424, ext. 4270

Police:

(Non-emergency): 905-546-4925*; a person will answer after the taped message (press 0 to skip the message)

WestTown Crime Manager, Sergeant Jo-Ann Savoie, 905-540-5093, or jsavoie@hamiltonpolice.on.ca

To report keg deliveries: 905-546-4771*; ask to have the Westdale beat officer call you

If you need further assistance: police reception desk, 905-546-4771*

Westdale beat officers' e-mail: westdale@hamiltonpolice.on.ca

Property-standards infractions (dwellings, structures, and yards): Councillor Brian McHattie, 905-546-2416, or bmchattie@hamilton.ca and copy his assistant, Nikola Patti, npatti@hamilton.ca

Signs

Illegal signs: 905-546-2424, ext. 2782

Street signs missing or damaged, traffic lights not working: 905-546-4376*

Snow-clearing infractions: 905-546-CITY (2489)*

*Hours are 24/7

The Way We Were

Streets and Businesses in the Village of West Hamilton 1908-2008

LOREEN JEROME



Robert Jones Dry Goods, corner of Emerson St. and Royal Ave., 1913. From 1919 to 1988 it included the village post office.

Picture: Courtesy David Jardine, *Ancaster—A Pictorial History*, Vol. 1 (Ancaster Township Historical Society, 1999).

Pioneer immigrants, mainly from the British Isles, settled in the Village of West Hamilton along with United Empire Loyalists who were awarded land grants. Early settlers' family names included Ainslie, Ashbaugh, Austin, Aylett, Bamberger, Bessey, Binkley, Bowman, Brown, Buttrum, Cline, Drew, Forsyth, Hemingway, Horning, Nutt, Mapes, Paisley, Rader, Stroud, and Tindale. Many of the streets in our community bear these early settlers' names (Emerson

Street was originally known as Bamberger's Lane). Cross streets consisted of First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Avenues, later known as Ainslie, Willowcrest, Whitney, Royal, Ward, and Sussex Avenues, respectively. Harriette Street became Hillview Avenue, and Lawrence Avenue became Clifford Street.

In the early days, West Hamilton had no sidewalks, lights, paved streets, or running water (just wells and outhouses). Installation of municipal services began soon after it was annexed to Hamilton on Jan. 1, 1930.

Sixth Avenue (later Sussex Avenue) was the first street to have paved sidewalks in West Hamilton.

Businesses over the years in the once-thriving Village of West Hamilton included Robert Jones Dry Goods, Osborne's Variety, Knowle's Hardware, Saunder's Groceries, Jardine's Hardware, Coghlan's Drugs, Hemingway's Butcher Shop (famous for their meat pies), George's Barber Shop, Stroud's Feed Store, Spriggs' Shoe Shop, Mapes Real Estate

and Fire Insurance, H. Hart Painter and Paper Hanger, Prescott's Grocery Store (on Leland), Thomas Collins Builder and Carpenter, Rader's Tailoring and Cleaning, A. H. Shuttler Barber, Stars Shoe Repair, Laing's Candy Shop, Orchard's Butcher Shop (later Prestedge's Variety), Bartlett's Groceries, Gemmel's Variety, Bowman Lumber Co. (now Aitchison Lumber), Hardwick's Photography, Royal Bank, Buckley's Variety Store, Stradwick's Fish and Chips, James Whyte Sheet and Metal Worker, Hodge's Bakery (later Snelgrove's), and Cole's Hardware on Broadway.

The Pavlowa Gardens, a large roller rink and dance hall, opened on Broadway Avenue in 1921. A victim of the Great Depression, this building was later used by the Windsor Wafer Company and the site is presently home to two small apartment buildings. A large brick home named Huntingford, built by **William Bamberger**, occupied the southeast corner of Emerson and Main Streets (now Swackhamer, Blachford & Wray Funeral Home). On the north side of Main Street West, facing Emerson Street, stood the large, square stone home of the **Forsyths**. It was demolished in 1927 to make way for McMaster University.

Near the house was a famous elm tree dating back to the 1700s. Experts believed it was one of the oldest trees on the continent, with a circumference of 17 feet, a diameter of five feet, and a height of 125 feet. It succumbed to Dutch Elm disease and had to be cut down in 1971.

To learn more about early West Hamilton, please refer to *West Hamilton, a Village and a Church* by David Jardine, available at the Westdale Library.

The Way We Were

The Village of West Hamilton 1908-2008

LOREEN JEROME

West Hamilton celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. The village, originally part of Ancaster, was located on the northeast corner of a piece of land surveyed by Augustus Jones in 1791. Four lots, numbered 22 to 25, became known as the Gore of Ancaster because of their triangular shape. Boundaries were later adjusted; lots west of Paradise Road on the south side of Main Street West, continuing west to Binkley's Corners (now Main Street West and Osler Drive), and working back east on the north side to the City of Hamilton, were incorporated into the Township of Ancaster.

Originally the land was used for agricultural purposes. After purchasing George and William Bamberger's farms, the Burke Real Estate Company created the first subdivision of West Hamilton in 1908 on land bounded by the escarpment, Emerson Street, Bowman Street, and the Hamilton and Dundas Stone Road (now Main Street West). Depending on location, lot sizes averaged 40 by 140 feet and sold for 90 cents to \$5 per frontage foot.

I recently spoke with long-time resident **Evelyn Roland** (née **Austin**), who was born and raised in West Hamilton 89 years ago. The Austins were the fifth family to settle in this community. From 1929 to 1971 Evelyn's grandparents, **George** and **Sarah**, ran Austin's Grocery Store (now the site of the West End Pub) at the southeast corner of Emerson and Royal.

Evelyn attended the four-room West Hamilton School on Bowman Street. A second storey was added in 1927, and later the school was renamed Princess Elizabeth School in honour of the then-young princess. Evelyn recalls ice skating on Binkley's Pond (after Mr. Binkley declared it safe by driving his horse and sleigh over it), hiking the Mountain, picking cherries on a farm near Hillfield School (now the site of Camelot Towers), swimming in Sydenham Creek near Cootes Paradise, eating outdoor breakfasts at 6 a.m. on



George Austin family, outside their first home on Emerson Street, summer 1908.

Picture: Courtesy Austin family, from David Jardine, *West Hamilton, A Village and a Church* (1990).

Sundays at the Drew Farm (now Chedoke Golf Course), and on Saturdays watching movies for five cents at Buckley's Hall on Emerson Street, which also served as a tonsil clinic in 1919. Buckley's Hall was sold to the Austin family in 1929, and several years later it was moved from beside Austin's Grocery Store to its present site on Royal Avenue, where it has been converted into a duplex.

Drs. Hyde, Leach, MacMillan, and Shaver attended to local health needs, while St. Margaret's Church (now St. George's) served spiritual needs. There was also a volunteer fire brigade, baseball and soccer teams, and Bamberger's Stop, where locals boarded the radial car at the West Hamilton Radial Station for Hamilton, Dundas, or Ancaster. **George "Fatty" Smith**, the resident police constable who lived on Royal Avenue, had a temporary jail cell in a room in his basement with barred windows.

The Governor was the nickname of a local colorful character who collected supplies for his flea market from the back alleys of Westdale and lost most of

the money at the race track. Buckley's Hall was the centre of the village's social life. There was also a Literary Society, orchestra, Women's Institute, and St. Margaret's Tennis Club.

The Farmer's Directory of 1914 listed 198 residents in the still-quiet farming village. Today the West Hamilton population of many thousands includes both long-time residents and students attending university.

Sources: David Jardine, *West Hamilton, A Village and a Church* (1990); Margaret Houghton (ed.), *Vanished Hamilton II* (Burlington, Ont.: North Shore Publishing Inc., 2006); David Jardine, *Ancaster—A Pictorial History*, Vol. 1 (Ancaster Township Historical Society, 1999).

Mailing Label